

# Contents

<b>Contents .....</b>	i
<b>List of Figures .....</b>	iv
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	v
<b>List of Plates .....</b>	vi
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	viii
<b>Glossary .....</b>	x
<b>Chapter 1 ‘For want of a horse, the rider was lost’: An introduction to Irish Iron Age tack .....</b>	1
Introducing the Iron (Age) horse .....	1
Research questions: aims and objectives .....	2
<b>Chapter 2 The Irish Iron Age horse in context: Literature and legend.....</b>	6
Introducing the issues.....	6
A horse with no name: unknown breeds of the Iron Age .....	6
Horses and heroes: status and deposition practices .....	7
Into the mystic: druids, scholars, and political agendas .....	9
Lost in translation: The Ulster Cycle and Irish equitation.....	10
Ancient problems, modern times.....	12
Looking to Europe.....	14
<b>Chapter 3 The Irish Iron Age bridle: Form, function, use-wear, and fit.....</b>	17
A practical introduction to bitting.....	17
Summary of methods used in analysis .....	18
Understanding the function of the bits and hackamore types of the Irish Iron Age .....	18
Identifying the Irish Iron Age bit types.....	20
Type A.....	21
Type B .....	22
Type C .....	22
Type D .....	22
Type E .....	22
Centre links .....	22
Stop-studs .....	23
Cheek rings .....	24
Description, background, and function of the Irish Y-piece .....	24
Y-piece types .....	25
Examining use-wear on bits and Y-pieces .....	26
Use-wear results: Bits .....	27
Use-wear results: Y-pieces .....	28
Repairs .....	28
The Dead Pony Club: reconstructing the Irish Iron Age bridle .....	29
Methods used to estimate sizes of horses present in the Irish Iron Age .....	30
<b>Chapter 4 Decoration, symbolism, and evolution of Irish Iron Age tack.....</b>	35
Designs on Celtic Identity? .....	35
The beginnings of insular La Tène art styles.....	36
La Tène-derivative styles in Ireland. ....	36
Looking at the pictures: analytical methods used.....	37
Analysis of symbol use on Y-pieces .....	38
Analysis of symbol use on bits .....	39
Stop stud design.....	41
Symbolism and morphology as identity .....	42
Mouthpiece morphology of Irish bits.....	43

Recurring decorative relief themes on Irish La Tène-derivative bits and Y-pieces.....	44
Irish bit morphology: Societal change and superstition .....	47
<b>Chapter 5 ‘Horses make a landscape look more beautiful’: Distribution, deposition, and landscape .....</b>	<b>52</b>
A landscape of objects? .....	52
Methods of analysis .....	53
Distribution .....	53
Landscape analysis .....	53
Pastures new: where were the grazing lands of the Late Iron Age horses? .....	54
Distribution of Irish Iron Age tack in Ireland, England and Wales .....	56
Distribution of Bits .....	57
Distribution of Y-pieces .....	60
Hoard locations .....	63
Find clusters .....	65
Landscape features and commonalities .....	70
Water depositions: rivers and lakes .....	72
Dry-land depositions: commonage .....	72
‘Heroic’ and folkloric sites.....	73
Re-use of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age sites .....	73
Sites replaced by Early Medieval ecclesiastical installations .....	74
All roads lead to Rome: tracks, memorials and roadside gods .....	74
<b>Chapter 6 Under the influence: Looking for the regional and cultural origins of Late Iron Age Irish tack ....</b>	<b>77</b>
Finding a context .....	77
British Tack: form and function .....	78
Summarised comparison.....	79
British single-bar bits .....	80
Summarised comparison.....	81
British single-jointed bits .....	81
Summarised comparison.....	82
British double-joint bits .....	82
Of unknown origins: iron loop bits .....	82
British bit types: distribution and estimated animal size .....	84
Hackamores and Y-pieces in England, Scotland, and Wales .....	85
Look homewards, angel: tracing Irish tack through Europe.....	86
The Netherlands: the <i>psalion</i> /mechanical hackamore and bits.....	87
Identity, militarism and ritual deposition of tack .....	88
Early equestrian influences on Germanic/Scandinavian tack .....	89
Thorsberg Moor war booty depositions as a template for Baltic Iron Age tack .....	89
The Thorsberg bits .....	90
Comparison to Ireland .....	91
The Thorsberg <i>kehlbergen</i> .....	92
Comparison to Ireland .....	92
Tack comparisons from the Roman Empire .....	92
Comparison to Ireland .....	93
<b>Chapter 7 Conclusions and future directions .....</b>	<b>95</b>
Jumping the hurdles: assessing the achievement of aims and objectives .....	95
The road goes ever on: future research directions.....	98
A clear round: concluding thoughts on Ireland’s equitation.....	99
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Catalogue .....</b>	<b>113</b>
Foreword .....	113
Type A bits .....	114
Type B bits.....	114
Type C bits.....	122
Type D bits .....	123
Type E bits .....	127

Unclassified bit types .....	131
Y-Pieces .....	133
Type 1a .....	133
Type 1b .....	137
Type 1c .....	141
Type 1d .....	141
Type 1e .....	143
Type 1f .....	144
Type 2a .....	144
Type 2b .....	148
Type 2c .....	150
Uncategorised specimens.....	151
<b>Lists and Indices .....</b>	<b>152</b>
Plate Index .....	152
Site Index .....	154
Unknown Provenance .....	156
Museum Index .....	157
Hoard associations including bits and Y-pieces .....	158
<b>Plates .....</b>	<b>159</b>